

Safety-Gram

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FALL PROTECTION

Unsafe conditions paired with unsafe actions of workers while working at heights is a recipe for disaster.

The risk for falls is virtually present in every single workplace, however, the factors that can lead to a fall vary greatly. Many unsafe acts by employees as well as unsafe conditions lead to fall incidents. Falls often result from a series of contributing factors. They are often the result of multiple unsafe conditions and unsafe actions combined. Because of this fact, it is important to look at unsafe conditions as well as unsafe actions to recognize hazardous situations when working at heights.

Section 913 (22) – Persons shall not ride in dippers, buckets, forks, clamshells, or other parts of any equipment not specifically designed for the transportation of persons.

Section 917 (5) – Safety belts and lines shall be worn when men work where there is danger of falling, and a second person shall tend the lifeline when bins, tanks or other dangerous areas are entered.

Unsafe Conditions that Lead to Falls

- Unguarded leading edges
- Open holes
- Improper guardrails
- Damaged equipment (ladders, stairs, safety equipment, etc.)
- Slippery conditions
- Unmarked elevation changes

Unsafe Actions that lead to Falls

- Working at heights without fall protection or fall prevention methods in place
- Improper use of ladders
- Leaning over guardrails

How often do our actions potentially lead to unsafe conditions at work?

Best Practices to Avoid falls in the Workplace

- Engineering controls such as physical barriers and guardrails are two fall prevention systems that are effective in preventing falls from heights.
- Using a proper fall arrest system such as a full-body harness, self-retracting lanyard, and approved anchor point with 100% tie-off is another way to prevent or mitigate the consequences of a fall.
- Proper use of ladders. This includes using three points of contact when climbing, not leaning to one side while on the ladder, setting the ladder at the proper angle, securing the ladder, etc.
- Proper housekeeping in work areas is important in preventing falls at the same level as well as falls from heights.
- Warning signs and other methods of communicating fall hazards to nearby workers.